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Media Contact:

Diane Hollingsworth, Executive Director
dhollingsworth@illinoiseyebank.org
312-469-5565

**Illinois Eye-Bank's Work in Corneal Transplantation Contributes
to Total Lifetime Net Benefit of Nearly \$6 Billion**

Washington, DC– (October 11, 2013) – Corneal transplants performed in the United States this year will result in nearly \$6 billion in total net benefits over the lifetime of the recipients, according to a six-month study undertaken by the Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA). Illinois Eye-Bank has been an EBAA member since 1961 and will provide nearly 2,100 corneas for transplant this year, with an estimated lifetime value of \$243,823,198*.

The study compared the medical cost of transplant procedures to the direct and indirect lifetime costs of the alternative – living with blindness or severe vision impairment. With a corneal transplant, an individual avoids the direct expenditures that come with vision loss, such as higher routine medical costs and long-term care costs, and the indirect costs of potential years of lost productivity to both the patients and their family caregivers.

Eye disorders are the fifth costliest to the U.S. economy after heart disease, cancer, emotional disorders and pulmonary conditions.

“The donation of corneal tissue undoubtedly has a positive impact on donor families and those who have received the gift of sight. This noteworthy study helps define the less obvious effect of eye tissue donation—the significant moral and educational value added to our communities,” says Diane Hollingsworth, Executive Director of the Illinois Eye-Bank.

The Eye Bank Association of America commissioned this study to determine the economic impact of corneal transplants. Researchers used previous years’ transplant numbers and census data to estimate total corneal transplants for the full 2013 calendar year.

The cost-benefit analysis depicted in the table below reveals that the lifetime benefit of the procedure is overwhelmingly greater than the costs of the surgery.



Lifetime Economic Cost-Benefit of Corneal Transplantation

Age Group	No. of Patients with a Corneal Transplant in 2013	Per-capita Cost and Benefit				Total Net Lifetime Benefit
		Medical Cost of Transplant	Benefits: Direct Medical	Benefits: Indirect	Net Lifetime Benefit	
0-17	362	\$19,200	\$27,000	\$233,000	\$241,000	\$87,240,000
18-39	2,466	\$18,900	\$40,000	\$219,000	\$240,000	\$591,840,000
40-64	9,125	\$15,900	\$63,000	\$218,000	\$265,000	\$2,418,125,000
65+	35,408	\$16,500	\$84,000	\$2,800	\$71,000	\$2,513,968,000
Total	47,361	\$16,500	\$77,000	\$214,000	\$118,000	\$5,588,598,000

Source: Cost-Benefit Analysis of Corneal Transplant, September 2013, The Lewin Group

As part of Midwest Eye-Banks, the Illinois Eye-Bank has helped more than 80,000 men, women and children receive corneal transplants to restore vision and relieve pain from injury and disease to the eye since it was founded in 1952. With a success rate greater than 95 percent, the one-hour procedure restores the patient's sight and his or her quality of life. In fact, it's one of the most common and least invasive transplant procedures. The EBAA study proves the value of the procedure and the economic benefit to the patient, family and society.

Corneal transplants also translate to direct federal and state government savings. This study assumed full retirement at age 65, so the net indirect cost savings is small for these patients, but the per-capita lifetime net medical benefits of \$67,500 for patients age 65 or greater receiving corneal transplants in 2013 will save Medicare, Medicaid and patients a combined \$2.4 billion nationally, and \$104,274,309 in the states served by the Illinois Eye-Bank.

For a full copy of the report, please contact EBAA at info@restoresight.org.

About the Illinois Eye-Bank: The Illinois Eye-Bank is a charitable, not-for-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and restoration of sight, through transplantation, research, education and partnership. Our mission is accomplished through the generosity of eye donors and their families, volunteers and charitable contributors. For more information, visit the Illinois Eye-Bank online at www.illinoiseyebank.org or call 800-548-4703.

About EBAA: The Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA), established in 1961, is the oldest transplant association in the nation and champions the restoration of sight through corneal transplantation. Over 80 member eye banks operate in the United States, Canada and Asia. These eye banks made possible more than 70,000 sight-restoring corneal transplants in 2012 and the opportunity to perform more transplants is significant. Aside from those suffering from infections or communicable diseases, virtually everyone is a universal donor. The function of corneal tissue is not dependent on blood type, age, strength of eyesight or the color of the eye. To learn more, visit www.restoresight.org

** Savings calculations are determined by multiplying the net lifetime benefit by the number of patients we served in 2012.*